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PART TWO OF THE REVIEW OF FIRST QUARTER 1992 MEXICAN LUCHA LIBRE

What do you think is the biggest accomplishment for the year so far for Mexico's leading promotion, the EMLL (Empresa Mexicana de la Lucha Libre)? Is it the new television contract? Is it a much-improved television show, particularly in the lighting, camera angles, and announcing? Is it the super main events? Is it the balancing of 165-plus egos, all wanting big pushes right away? Well, what would you think if I told you I think the most impressive thing they have done all year is to get over Konnan el Barbaro and The Love Machine as babyfaces (tecnicos) when the fans were naturally inclined to boo them? And how do you get a face over when the fans would rather boo than cheer?

Take the case of Konnan. Please. (Hey, if he can be an actor and a singer then I can be a comedian). Konnan has several strikes against him in the eyes of the Mexican fan. He is an American citizen. This is not a big strike but is a small one. He has an anabolic physique that is referred to as such by the rudo wrestlers. Speaking of which, "la porra ruda," the hard-core heel fans, picked on Konnan early and often as a wrestler to root against, and many other fans were swayed. Fans were also swayed by a long, ruthless anti-Konnan campaign waged by Benjamin Mora junior in Mora's *Lucha Libre Mundial* magazine. After seeing the success that the long-haired Casanova el Vampiro Canadiense had in getting over, Konnan decided that he, too, would have hair implants done and become long-haired. The result at times looked phony and at times looked ridiculous (unless you like macho guys wearing a Marilyn Quayle-like dipsy do haircut). Then, soon after the implants, Konnan risked his hair in a triangular with Cien Caras and Pedro "el Perro" Aguayo. Fans booed like crazy at Konnan's artificially enhancing his hair just before a hair match. Later in the year, Konnan was involved in the final match of referee el Gran Davis, who died within twenty-one hours of disqualifying Konnan for hitting him (Davis) about the head; many fans suspected (especially in light of allegations by Davis's brother) that the blows by Konnan, while accidental and not deliberate, may have contributed to Davis's death. Quite a list of "negatives," huh?

Well, fans *were* booing Konnan. It appeared that, at least according to speculation in several magazines, Konnan might turn heel. The promoters, however, (Paco Alonso and Antonio Pena) wanted Konnan as a face. So they decided to devise a scenario to strengthen his image. First, they kept him off television and off Friday night main events for several weeks. Then, they booked him into a strange match. He was to team with his "second most bitter rival," the man he had won the first CMLL World Heavyweight Championship from and then lost it to later in 1991, Cien Caras. They were to team against Konnan's "most bitter rival," the man to whom he lost his mask and from whom he won the hair, Pedro "el Perro" Aguayo, and Sangre Chicana, a man Konnan had been feuding with in Monterrey during the few weeks he was off the Friday night main event shows. Caras and Chicana are two heels almost no fans ever cheer for, while Konnan was getting a mixed reaction, and everyone was cheering the legendary Aguayo. Well, the script was written so that everybody turned on Aguayo. Perro was pounded upon mercilessly. Finally, in the third fall, Caras and Chicana forgot about the rules of the match and did not bother to see who would win, just pounded on Aguayo. Konnan, very dramatically, since he was a face and Aguayo was his opponent, threw up his hands and left the ring as the match was out of control. Konnan got back beyond where the porra ruda sits and turned around, slowly, as if listening to the fans who were chanting for Aguayo to be saved. After a couple of minutes of thought, Konnan raced to the ring and saved the fans' hero. Then, after the two had a long stare-down, they shook hands and hugged. Since that match, Konnan and Aguayo have been inseparable, in every match together. When Aguayo had his one singles match of 1992, against Chicana, Konnan was his second.

The fans bought it. Konnan is now getting almost total cheers. How did the promotion turn the fans? After all, it was the fans who turned, not Konnan. The promotion aligned him with the most over face in the territory, hoping some good will would rub off. They paired Konnan against the most evil and least cheered of all the rudos. They wrote a script so that Konnan had to actively decide to do good and be good when he could have just as rightly turned his back and left. After the big match, they had Konnan and Aguayo make personal fan appearances everywhere. Konnan even shakes the hand of 92-year-old Dona Virginia "Vicky" Aguilera every time he comes to the ring for his matches and she's there. He works straight babyface (tecnico) style and actively plays to the crowd, looking for support when he's about to kick the rudos' butts. When he has other matches around the horn, he is never matched against a "cool" rudo that the fans love to cheer, like a Fuerza Guerrera or a Blue Panther. The promotion consciously went out and found a way to persuade the fans to cheer for whom the promotion wanted

them to. It worked in spades. But it was a different strategy than used for The Love Machine.

What the promotion wanted to do with the Love Machine was to bring him in, have him lose his mask in a short series against The Blue Panther, so that Panther's value would be increased and when (or if) it comes time for Panther to lose his mask to Atlantis as has been rumored, that match will mean (and draw) even more. Love Machine's negatives were fewer and different. First he was a non-Hispanic American, which can be a positive to the lady fans but a big negative to the vocal "porra ruda." Second, his hot temper had led him to a legit brawl in the EMLL offices with Blue Panther, one that was publicized in the magazines, with Machine painted as the heavy. Then, Machine, even though he was to be the face, towered over Panther. I'd guess Machine to be about 6'2" and Panther about 5'4" or 5'5". This makes Panther more likely to get the underdog cheers. Finally, Panther is a "cool" heel, a maestro, so technically talented that most fans cheer him anyway. What could the promotion do to get the fans to "react right" this time?

They were more subtle about this. Mostly, they had Panther abandon his cool working style and just be a punching, kicking rudo, the kind of rudo who cheats and takes advantages and shortcuts whenever possible, so that he was no longer wrestling a cool style. They put over Machine strong by having him win as many matches and as many falls within those matches as possible. They put Machine in with cool faces, the ones the fans cheered, like Vampiro and Octagon. They especially had the television announcing team (more crucial here since Machine was a brand new character) push him strong as a good tecnico and the type of wrestler the fans should cheer. Finally, they wrote a script so that Panther would "injure" Machine, "breaking his ankle" (or spraining it) so that Machine could get the sympathy of the casual fans.

It worked. Despite all the negatives they have, both Konnan and Machine are regularly cheered; are cheered for more than their opponents have gotten cheered; and they have gotten over much more than they were getting over just a few months ago. The promotion took advantage of the wrestlers' positives, eliminated their negatives, and wrote scripts to play upon the fans' natural cheering tendencies to make the fans react as the promotion wants. They did not tailor the wrestlers or the action to the fans' needs but inspired the fans to see things the way the promotion wanted them to.

The UWA in the first quarter of 1992 has floundered. They have had more "big matches" and more heavy pushes than any quarter that I can remember going back at least to the summer of 1989. What can be done to push the UWA back on a more profitable (and more-well-attended) course? I have some ideas.

- * First and foremost, they must from here on out, for the foreseeable future, have clean finishes in all of their matches, in every third fall of every match, if not every fall. The fans are clearly so used to non-decisive, scew-job, and/or cheap finishes that most have turned away from the promotion in frustration. The UWA attendance is off by over 50% from eighteen months ago.

- * They must push new guys harder. This should include giving title and having stipulation matches won by the underdog. The same faces have been on top here for years, and the same people have been champions for years. What would be fresher (that's a pun) than to have la Ola Lila as the UWA Trios Champions, el Indomito as unified light heavyweight champion, and el Colosso as new Heavyweight champion, etc. They need fresh blood and to push it, not just to have it.

- * They should continue the trend of bringing in world class foreign talent, such as Lyger, Pegasus, Furnas, Korffat, etc., but should keep them in for more than two weeks at a time. When the EMLL brings in foreign talent, such as Grundy, Blondy, Konnan, Misterioso, Black Magic, etc., they stay around for long stretches, so that the fans can find them, see them, discover them, identify (with) them, etc. The foreigners become familiar faces instead of comets in and gone in a hurry. Which brings us to the next point.

- * Canek has got to abandon the script of rudo with the Mexicans/tecnico with the foreigners/run the foreigners out of Mexico. This may be great for getting a few hard core fans to cheer for Canek but it is slow death to the promotion. Canek is an excellent worker (see page 8) but he needs new scripts very badly.

- * They need their big stars to do more jobs. When was the last time Mil Mascaras lost a singles match? Canek has lost only two in two-plus years (to Dos Caras and Vader); Villano III has lost two in the same time; and Dos Caras has lost one (to Scorio in 1990). They trade wins in the trios matches but their singles matches just don't draw any more. You don't have to wonder why, you can see why.

- * They need to have a more tight front office. When I went to purchase tickets for the el Toreo show last September, I had to fight my way past three scalpers *who were in the ticket line for ringside seats*. What kind of promotion can it be when to buy tickets in their own ticket line (and the two head promoters are the ones manning the ticket booth, too!) you have to fight past scalpers IN THE LINE? To add to this, their shows are poorly run, with long delays between matches being especially bad. If any of you ever went to World Class shows in the

resembles that travesty very closely in that regard. Actually, sadly, the promotion has a number of basic things to work on. I have not even touched on their television show, which definitely looks second class compared to the EMLL show, but if they corrected all of these other things, the TV show would by a tiny speck, figuratively speaking.

LATE NEWS

Before getting into Sunday's results, I want to add a couple of notes. First, the UWA announced that Andre the Giant would return to Mexico for the first time in many years on April 18 and 19. They may get more dates than that out of him. Second, Bam Bam Bigelow is scheduled to return for the period of April 12-25. Then, I also have the results from the EMLL show which took place Sunday, March 15, 1992, at la Plaza de Toros Monumental in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Mexico, at the first CMLL convention. The crowd, by the way, was just 11,000 in a 14,500 seat arena, and was considered a disappointment. It wasn't much of a line-up though. The main event, as previously reported, saw Cien Caras retain the CMLL World Heavyweight Championship by defeating Casanova el Vampiro Canadiense two falls to one. Sangre Chicana, Caras's second, held Vampiro down in the third fall, outside the ring and away from the view of local referee el Texano, and Vampiro was counted out. The semifinal saw Konnan el Barbaro, Octagon, and el Rayo de Jalisco junior defeat Sangre Chicana, Jerry "el Puma" Estrada, and Mascara Ano Dos Mil in three falls. The fourth match had Ciclon Ramirez, el Tigre Universitario, and la Aguila Solitaria over los Nuevos Destructores del Ring (Tony Arce, Rocco Valente, and el Vulcano) in three falls. The tercera had la Mascara Sagrada and el Polimero Espacial over el Hombre Bala and el Sanguinario (father of Super Muneco). The segunda had Octagoncito and la Mascarita Sagrada over el Espectrito (junior) and el Pequeno Pierroth in three falls. And the inicial saw Martha "la Aplandora" Villalobos and la Pantera Surena win a non-title match in three falls over Zuleyma and Lady Apache.

Now on to the results from Sunday, April 5, 1992. At the UWA card at el Toreo de Cuatro Caminos, el Hijo de Santo (Roberto Guzman Huerta junior) retained his UWA World Welterweight Championship by defeating la Sombra Negra (Juan Jose Salazar) two falls to one. I do not have any big details on any of these matches (but one) but the paper *La Prensa* reported that the fans were sorely disappointed in this match and in the UWA card as a whole. The semifinal saw Fishman, The Head Hunter A, and The Head Hunter B defeated The Pegasus Kid, Haraoki "el Gran" Hamada, and el Villano III in three falls. The paper reported that at the end of the match, Fishman challenged The Pegasus Kid to a match for the WWF World Light Heavyweight Championship, but that Pegasus wanted a mask versus hair match. This of course means that The Pegasus Kid retained the WWF Title over el Villano IV in the main event of the card held Friday, April 3, 1992, at la Arena Netzahualcoyotl; whether it was via a victory or a draw I do not know. There were four other matches held at el Toreo this past Sunday, and I have the results of only one. El Texano returned to team with Silver King and el Villano IV and they defeated los Nuevos Misioneros de la Muerte (The Black Power II, el Signo, and Miguel "el Negro" Navarro) in three falls. The UWA World Trios Titles held by los Misioneros were not at stake in this match. By the way, for those of you who have never been to or seen the arena "el Toreo de Cuatro Caminos," the world's only indoor/outdoor/at the same time arena, this Friday night on Showtime, Julio Cesar Chavez will be defending his World Boxing Title at el Toreo in a live fight against Angel Hernandez. The promoter of that fight is Don King.

And, I have late results from the card held Sunday evening, April 5, 1992, at la Arena Mexico in Mexico City, by the EMLL. This is the last card for the EMLL at la Arena Mexico for seven weeks, until Friday, May 22, 1992. I have results only of the two main events. Apolo Dantes won a caballera contra caballera match over Javier "el Monarca" Cruz two falls to one. The finish of the third fall was a clean pinfall via the northern lights suplex hold by Dantes over Cruz. The semifinal, in a match for the NWA World Light Heavyweight Championship, in a major surprise, el Satanico (Jose Daniel Lopez Lopez) defeated Lizmark (Juan Banos) two falls to one. This just adds to el Satanico's record of holding more belts more different times than any other luchador in the 58 + year history of Mexican lucha libre. The surprise was no so much that el Satanico won but in the timing. Lizmark was scheduled to defend the NWA belt versus Saigon Dragon, el Ultimo Dragon (Yoshihiro Asai) in Japan on April 18, 1992, at the Tokyo Coliseum. I do not know now whether el Satanico will go and defend the belt or whether Lizmark will go and that the matches will be for no title. This really can only hurt the SWS on this tour. They had promoted Ric Flair defending the WWF title versus Genichiro Tenryu and Lizmark defending the NWA World Light Heavyweight belt versus Dragon on the April 18 card at The Tokyo Coliseum (which wasn't selling well ticket-wise anyway) and now, on April 5, 1992, both foreign champions lost their belts and essentially their allure and drawing power to the Japanese fan. We shall see, however, in the next week, whether any "alterations" can be made to this card. And it just goes to show with the EMLL, even the most carefully planned out scenarios, such as Dragon winning the NWA belt from Lizmark in front of the home fans in Tokyo, are never ever cast in stone. With all the factions in the front office here, sometimes I am actually more amazed when some of the long-planned story lines actually *do* pan out.

Next week, in a special feature, I will begin a "mini-biography" series with a mini-bio of Fuerza Guerrera. Also, the review of the classic Black Bull match from Los Angeles this past March 29, 1992. Also info on UWA/EMLL on satellite, times and channels, etc. Bet you can't wait, huh? I look forward to hearing any and all feedback you have.

EMLL TELEVISION RUNDOWN: Here are the highlights of the show that aired on Galavision on Sunday, April 5, 1992, and was taped Friday, March 27, 1992, at la Arena Mexico:

* The opener of the five match card did not air on television. That opener featured the brother team of el Felino ("Baby" Casas) and Erick "el Canelo" Casas versus el Nuevo Audaz (apparently not related to the original el Audaz from the 1950's) and el Guerrero Samurai II.

* The second match was the television opener. The result was a victory for the trio team of Black Magic (Norman Smiley), The Blue Demon junior (Luis Rabadan junior), and captain el Hijo del Solitario over el Espectro junior (Antonio Hernandez junior), Ponzona (Americo Rocca), and captain Universo Dos Mil two falls to one in a total elapsed time of 17:22. By the way, the ring announcer for tonight's card was opera star Vitorino; the referees for this opening match were el Tigre Hispano and Pepe "Carmelo" Casas. This was only a fair opener. The tecnicos won the first fall when Black Magic made Ponzona submit at 9:19 to el abrazo de oso (bearhug). The rudos came back at 4:03 of the second fall when Ponzona made Soli submit to a reverse flying chicken-wing hammerlock submission hold (a neat move). The third fall was the best fall of the match, and ended with Soli pinning Universo Dos Mil at 4:00 with the power bomb. Soli had his mask totally removed during this fall, but no DQ was called by either referee, since neither ref actually saw Universo rip the mask off. But Soli, who is slowly but surely improving, got his revenge with the pin fall. Hispano, by the way, injured his ankle in the first fall and missed the rest of the card, which is why for the last three matches the referees were the same--Roberto "el Guero" Rangel and "el Gato" Montini (Javier Medina). * 3/4.

* Before the next match, el Dandy (Roberto Gutierrez Frias) was interviewed by Raul Sarmiento; Dandy spoke honestly about his recent tour of Japan, saying that in friendly matches he won and lost versus el Ultimo Dragon. Despite the honesty of the interview, the announcers then proceeded to call Dandy "el triunfador de Japon" during the entire length of the next match, even though Dragon was Dandy's partner.

* And in that match, tecnicos captain el Dandy, Saigon Dragon, el Ultimo Dragon (Yoshihiro Asai), and Salomon Grundy emerged victorious in three falls over the rudo team of los Mosqueteros del Diablo, los Brazos (el Brazo, el Brazo de "Super Porky" Plata, and captain and oldest brother el Brazo de Oro) in a total elapsed time of 15:35. The first fall saw el Brazo de Plata pin both Grundy (with a jumping body press) and Dragon (with The Norman Sit) at the 6:20 mark. The second fall went 4:00 even before Dandy pinned el Brazo de Oro with a schoolboy cradle. And the third fall, the best fall of the night, went 4:17 before a triple face victory finish. First, Dragon did the Asai moonsault (la quebrada, or el mortal al frente) onto el Brazo de Plata (and hitting Vitorino by accident as well). Then Grundy dove with a big 747 splash onto el Brazo from off of the second rope corner turnbuckle. Finally, captain Dandy pinned captain el Brazo de Oro with a super dandina cradle (or la magisterial if you prefer). The match had only been average up to this point, mainly consisting of Grundy's and el Brazo de Plata's doing big man spots on the other team. Grundy, by the way, is far more over than you would think by his work rate and reputation. He gets a lot of heat (crowd reaction) for his spots and is a nice comedy figure; the EMLL promoters know exactly where and how to use him. I thought the two best workers in this match were el Brazo de Plata and el Ultimo Dragon, particularly when they were in against each other. ** 3/4.

* Next they had an abbreviated version of the fan popularity poll, el Cartometro del Ring. In this week's "poll," the two most popular tecnicos were Pedro "el Perro" Aguayo and Octagon; the two most popular rudos were Sangre Chicana and Cien Caras; and the two most popular luchadoras were Lady Apache and Martha "la Aplandora" Villalobos.

* Then we came to the semifinal of the card. In this one, the rudo team of el Satanico (Jose Daniel Lopez Lopez), la Bestia Salvaje (Juan Manuel Carillo Rodriguez), and captain The Blue Panther defeated the tecnico team of Octagon, The Love Machine (Art Barr), and captain Atlantis in two straight falls in 9:16. Salvaje pinned Atlantis to end both falls, thus setting up Salvaje's challenging Atlantis for the NWA Middleweight Championship the following Friday night (which Salvaje missed due to his injury). The first fall went 4:26 before Salvaje hit the old Road-Warrior-off-the-top-rope-clothesline while your partner is holding him up finisher. The second fall went 4:50 before Salvaje nailed a power bomb clean on Atlantis. This is the usual script of Atlantis losing two straight falls and then defending his NWA title the next week for revenge. They don't do it often but they do do it the same way every time. Anyway, this was the best match of the show. It was not a long match because on TV they had a lot of time booked for the challenges between Atlantis and Salvaje, and between Panther and Machine. In fact, they legit spent more time issuing the challenges than they did in the match. In this match, the work of Salvaje and Octagon were super, while Panther, Atlantis, and Machine were not far behind; el Satanico was fine but not really called on to do anything. Salvaje has turned into one of the best workers in all of Mexico (see page eight) in my opinion in the last year. A super match psychologically and fine work too. *** 1/4. This was the worst I have seen Machine look, but he was still fine. By the way, Machine just towers over Panther; he may be legitimately nine to twelve inches taller. And next week, on the mask match main event, if you can catch it, look at Machine's shoes. Some of you may have seen the

picture in *Super Luchas* magazine, but Barr wears a huge lift (three inches) in his right boot and none in his left boot. If I did not know any better, and I don't, I'd say one of Barr's legs is significantly shorter than the other.

* Next, we had an interview with referee "el Gato" Montini, who explained why he interfered so blatantly in last week's match (way to sum up last week's match in one sentence, Dave.) It was a calm and effective interview, as Montini was arrogant and yet firm.

* Finally, we came to the main event. Here we had the rudos winning two straight falls again, as Sangre Chicana (Andres Richardson Reyna), captain Cien Caras (Carmelo Reyes Gonzales), and la Fiera (Arturo Casco) defeated Konnan el Barbaro (Carlos Santiago Espada Moises), Casanova el Vampiro Canadiense (does any body know his real name? Is it in fact Pat Ryan?), and captain Pedro "el Perro" Aguayo (Pedro Aguayo Damian) in a total elapsed time of 16:38. The first fall ended in 8:02 with a total destruction of the faces culminating in la Fiera giving Konnan a tombstone piledriver. At least the recipient of this tombstone came within the same zip code as the mat, unlike a certain other tombstone I saw delivered April 5. The second fall ended in one of the most obscure finishes of any match in any federation I have ever seen at 8:36. Earlier in the second fall, Sangre Chicana had been pinned. Since CHicana was not the captain, the fall would continue, but CHicana would be eliminated. Well, the match broke down (it seemed that the faces literally forgot the script). Finally, the faces (notably Vampiro) dragged CHicana back into the ring and strated pounding on him and tried to pin him again. Heel ref Montini recognized that continuing to pound away at an "already eliminated" wrestler is an automatic disqualification and called for the DQ. Amazingly to me, the fans understood this right away. These must be some smart fans. Vampiro was pissed however and tossed Montini over the top rope (very gingerly I might add). This allowed Montini to "suspend" Vampiro for 30-60 days, so that Vampiro can in fact return home to Canada for a vacation until the next EMLL tour of la Arena Mexico begins on May 22, 1992. Vampiro is super over with the screaming young girls, and Konnan gets a lot more cheers than he used to but neither one comes close to the cheers Perro Aguayo gets. As mentioned in the lead story, it is amazing to me how Aguayo, after being around since 1970, most of those years in main events, and at age 46-plus (born 1/28/46) can suddenly get over like nobody's business. You'd think the fans would be tired of him but then again he's only in main events here twice a year, for 3-6 weeks, during a tour of la Arena Mexico, so they don't burn him out. Anyway, back to this match, the faces mostly got destroyed, which is interesting because this is the last time this match will be booked for two months (next weeks Caras and his two brothers face Konnan/Perro/Rayo de Jalisco junior). But this feud was not exactly "blown off," but left more in a to be continued mode. The pace of tonight's match was not nearly so frantic as last week's match, and Montini did not interfere nearly so much. Konnan was busted wide open early in the first fall; this is the first time I can remember him bleeding on TV. Aguayo was body-slammed into the second and nearly third row of ringside seats. (By the way, in its 4/11/92 issue, *Custodia* magazine calls on the EMLL and the commission to stop "letting" its wrestlers brawl into the ringside seats; this is the same magazine that called for AIDS testing because of all the heavy bleeding prevalent in the EMLL main events as of late.) This was a fine brawl, though there was little in the way of wrestling moves. ** 3/4.

The full television line-up for next weeks' television show (the one taped 4/3 at la Arena Mexico to be broadcast 4/12/92 on Galavision) is as follows:

* The inicial, which will surely be off television, will feature tecnicos el Misterioso and el Volador, the new National tag team champions, in a trio tag versus the men they beat for the title, rudos Tony Arce and el Vulcano. The third member of the tecnico team will be Ringo Mendoza's younger brother, el Cachorro Mendoza, while the third member of the rudo team called "Los Nuevos Destructores del Ring" will be Tony Arce's younger brother, Rocco Valente.

* The TV opener will likely be the card segunda. It has the new CMLL World Trios Champions, los Intocables del Ring (Pierroth junior, Masakre, and Jaque Mate) in a non-title match versus Octagon, la Mascara Sagrada, and Apolo Dantes.

* The tercera, as mentioned previously, will have los Hermanos Dinamita (Cien Caras, Mascara Ano Dos Mil, and Universo Dos Mil) versus Konnan el Barbaro, el Rayo de Jalisco junior, and Pedro "el Perro" Aguayo. This is supposedly being billed as Konnan's "retirement" match. Los Dinamita, who are the Mexican National Trios Champions, will not be defending those belts in this match.

* The semifinal was supposed to have la Bestia Salvaje challenging Atlantis for the latter's NWA World Middleweight Championship, but la Fiera will now replace the injured Salvaje. This will be Atlantis's 32nd title defense of the title he won Wednesday, August 1, 1990, in Acapulco, Guerrero, over el Dandy.

* And, in the main event, The Blue Panther and The Love Machine have their mascara contra mascara match. Frankly, I would be stunned if Panther lost, even though it has been reported in *Lucha Libre Mundial* magazine that Panther has agreed to lose his mask already (to Atlantis, however, per that report, not to The Love Machine). Stranger things have happened in this league. I would actually be more suprised, actually, if Atlantis lost his match than if The Blue Panther lost his.

BIG WEEK IN MEXICO CITY

In my few years of following lucha libre from Mexico City, I must say that this past weekend was one of the biggest weekends I can remember. There were just a ton of big stipulation matches, "main events in any arena," all over the area. Here is to what I am referring:

- * 4/3/92, la Arena Mexico, EMLL: The Blue Panther versus The Love Machine in a mascara contra mascara (mask) match and Atlantis defending versus la Fiera in a match for the NWA World Middleweight Championship.
- * 4/5/92, la Arena Mexico, EMLL: Apolo Dantes versus Javier "el Monarca" Cruz in a caballera contra caballera (hair) match; and Lizmark defending the NWA World Light Heavyweight Championship versus el Satanico
- * 4/5/92, la Arena Lopez Mateos, EMLL: A tournament to crown new parejas (tag-team) champions of la Arena Lopez Mateos.
- * 4/5/92, la Arena Naucalpan, EMLL: A tournament to crown a new Welterweight Champion of Naucalpan.
- * 4/5/92, la Arena San Lorenzo, EMLL: Selene defending versus Josseline her Ladies' Championship of la Arena San Lorenzo and a hair match between el Perro Negro and Genaro Contreras III.
- * 4/5/92, la Arena Isabel in Leon, EMLL: El Loco Valentino versus el Gran Apache II in a caballera contra caballera bout
- * 4/3/92, la Arena Netzahualcoyotl, UWA (TV Taping to air 4/11/92 in Mexico City): Double Main Event: The Pegasus Kid defended the WWF World Light Heavyweight Championship versus el Villano IV and el Signo defended the UWA World Light Heavyweight Championship versus el Villano V. (I expect one Villano to win and one not to, although the papers said that if The Pegasus Kid and el Signo both won they would challenge each other to a title unification match, so who knows?)
- * 4/3/92, la Arena Puente Negro, UWA: El Indomito defended his Distrito Federal Light Heavyweight Championship versus el Principe Island.
- * 4/5/92, el Toreo de Cuatro Caminos, UWA: El Hijo del Santo defended his UWA World Welterweight Championship versus la Sombra Negra. A note here. "La Sombra Negra" used to be billed as "el Hijo de Black Shadow" until he was unmasked by el Hijo del Santo at la Plaza de Toros Monumental de Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, on December 15, 1991. Negra was shown to be the former el Pequeno Solin, Juan Jose Salazar, and not at all the son of Alejandro Cruz, the original Black Shadow. Salazar got a lot of heat as billing himself as the son of someone when he wasn't. Plus, there is already working in Mexico a "Black Shadow II" and "Black Shadow junior," the latter of whom in fact is the current and two-time WWA World Lightweight Champion. So Salazar and the promoters decided "la Sombra Negra" was a more honest (?) ring name, even though it is just the Spanish translation for "The Black Shadow." The results of this match are in the late news section; I hope that the results of many others of these matches will also be there.

Now that runs down just the main event stipulation matches, but there were other big name main events throughout the territory this weekend as well. They included:

- * 4/2/92, la Pista Arena Revolucion, UWA: The main event had The Head Hunters (or los Cazadores del Cabeza if you prefer) A and B teaming with Jose "el Negro" Casas against Haraoki "el Gran" Hamada, el Villano III, and Silver King. Silver King is booked in main events throughout this weekend without his normal tag team partner, el Texano. I don't know if this means el Texano is hurt or something, but he may just be in Baja California for the weekend, as that is his home state.
- * 4/2/92, la Arena Toluca, UWA: The main event had The Pegasus Kid (Christopher Michael Benoit) and Doctor Wagner junior versus UWA World Heavyweight Champion Dos Caras and el Colosso.
- * 4/2/92, in Zacatecas, UWA: The main event had Enrique Vera, el Celestial, and el Sicodelico versus Fishman, el Engendro, and el Indomito.
- * 4/3/92, la Arena Lopez Mateos, UWA: The main event had Jose "el Negro" Casas and Fishman versus el Hijo del Santo and el Villano III.
- * 4/3/92 at the 5th of May school in Mexico City, UWA: The main event for the school children saw Kahos I, Kahos junior, and Takeda face off against el Scorpio I, el Scorpio junior, and The Baby Face I.
- * 4/4/92, la Arena Isabel, Cuernavaca, UWA: The main event here had those nasty Head Hunters A and B again, teaming this time with The Pegasus Kid, who is still a rudo until his "first match as a tecnico 4/5/92 at el Toreo" facing off against Silver King, el Villano III, and Haraoki "el Gran" Hamada. So you get an idea of what a full weekend it was in Mexico City for lucha libre aficionados this past weekend.

RESULTS: Here are some of the latest results that I have from the Mexico City area:

* Tuesday, March 17, 1992, at la Arena Coliseo: The main event saw Atlantis make his 31st defense of his NWA World Middleweight Championship a successful one, defeating Javier "el Monarca" Cruz two falls to one. Atlantis was seconded by Super Astro and Cruz by ?. The referee was "el Guero" Rangel. The finish of the third fall saw Atlantis pin Cruz with a regular rana. The semifinal saw los Nuevos Infernales (M. S. 1, el Pirata Morgan, and el Satanico) over Super Astro, Salomon Grundy, and el Rayo de Jalisco junior in three falls when all three Infernales pinned captain Rayo in the third fall. This was a non-title match. Also on the card, los Nuevos Destructores del Ring (Tony Arce, el Vulcano, and Rocco Valente) defeated el Misterioso, el Volador, and el Filoso two falls to one. El Filoso used to be a wrestler for the EMLL under a different name (el Justiciero, maybe?) and started up this gimmick in February. By the way, Bronce, who debuted last week as trio partner of Oro and Plata, used to be "la Mascara." That at least is 99.44% likely based on the clues I've picked up. To round out this Arena Coliseo card, the rudo super-mini-estrellas team of el Pequeno Pierroth, el Piratita Morgan, and el Espectrito (junior) defeated la Mascarita Sagrada, la Aguila Solitaria, and Octagoncito in three falls. And the opener saw los Kaifanes I and II over (Super) Kiss and el Guerrero Samurai II.

* In the match that was off television last Sunday March 29 (and was taped March 20 at la Arena Coliseo), tecnicas Lady Apache, Xochitl Hamada, and Lola "Dinamita" Gonzales defeated las Guerrerillas (Martha "la Aplandora" Villalobos, la Pantera Surena, and Wendy) in three falls. The rudas all entered the arena on motorcycles...

* At the la Pista Arena Revolucion card I mentioned last week, I have full results. The Blue Panther defeated el Foiloso to retain his CMLL World Middleweight Championship. Ciclon Ramirez won a mascara contra mascara match over la Dahlia Negra, who turned out to be Esmiliano Quiroga, of Veracruz, Veracruz, Mexico, 34 years old, who used to wrestle as el Suriano. Also, Pedro "el Perro" Agauyo teamed with Atlantis and Casanova el Vampiro Canadiense to beat los Hermanos Dinamita (Cien Caras, Mascara Ano Dos Mil, and Universo Dos Mil) in three falls (non-title). Also, los Intocables del Ring (Jaque Mate, Masakre, and Pierroth junior) won an all-rudo battle over los Nuevos Destructores del Ring (Tony Arce, el Vulcano, and Rocco Valente). Finally, los Guerreros Maya (Damian el Guerrero, el Guerrero Maya, and el Guerrero del Futuro) defeated el Antifaz, Bronce, and el Cachorro Mendoza in 3.

* On the la Arena Mexico card March 22 where los Intocables won the CMLL World Trios titles from los Nuevos Infernales, here are the rest of the results: Atlantis, Octagon, and Black Magic defeated la Fiera, The Blue Panther, and Emilio Charles junior in what was probably a great match. The tercera saw el Volador, el Cachorro Mendoza, and Apolo Dantes easily over Javier "el Monarca" Cruz, Popitekus (Super Popi turns between rudo and tecnico often these days), and Kung Fu. The segunda saw that obnoxious Javier "el Gusano" Llanes team with el Guerrero de la Muerte and el Halcon Negro junior to defeat Ciclon Ramirez, Bronce, and la Aguila Solitaria. The opener had rudas la Diabolica and Maria del Angel over Atenas and Janet in three falls.

* Lasser retained his UWA World Lightweight Championship by making defense number twelve a success in defeating Zeus in three falls on Tuesday, March 31, 1992, at la Arena Queretaro in Queretaro, Queretaro, Mexico.

* Octagon successfully retained his Mexican National Middleweight Championship by defeating la Bestia Salvaje two falls to one on Thursday, March 26, 1992, at la Arena Isabel in Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico.

* On Wednesday, March 18, 1992, at el Deportivo Peneles gym in Mexico City, Distrito Federal, Mexico, Ringo Mendoza teamed up with Casanova el Vampiro Canadiense to defeat los Destructores (Tony Arce and el Vulcano) in three falls. The finish of the third fall saw Arce disqualified for fouling Vampiro.

* Also from March 18, I have two UWA results. At la Arena Lopez Mateos in Tlalnepantla, las Panteras Rosas (los Villanos I, IV, and V) defeated Kahos I, el Scorpio I, and el Scorpio junior two falls to one when el Villano I pinned el Scorpio I with a rana to end the third fall. And at la Arena Apatlaco in Mexico City, los Guerreros del averno (Shu, el Guerrero, el Lobo Rubio, and el Hijo del Diablo) defeated las Bestias (la Bestia I, la Bestia II, and la Bestia Negra) two falls to one when all three Bestias fouled Shu, el Guerrero, to end the third fall in a disqualification.

* And throughout Japan, Ultraman Dos Mil (on his tenth tour, not his ninth as I had mistakenly reported last week), generally emerged victorious over fellow Tijuana luchador Genghis Khan in a series of matches. The two were supposed to have had a mascara contra mascara match on March 28th in Toda; both *Weekly Pro Wrestling* and *Weekly Gong* magazine had reported the match would take place. Instead, they had a regular singles' match, which ended with Khan winning via pinfall in 9:07 due to the outside interference of some of Khan's rudo friends. I suppose this feud will continue on the next tour.

* Finally, I did confirm that on Friday, December 20, 1991, at el Auditorio Municipal in Tijuana, Baja California Norte, Mexico, los Mercenarios Americanos (Billy "The Star Man" Anderson, Louie "Cutie Pie" Spicoli, and Tim "no nickname" Patterson) lost the WWA World Trios Championships to the team of la Aguila del America (Bobby Bradley), (Super) Kiss, and Ultraman Dos Mil in a minor upset, as three Tijuana Mexicanos beat three Angelino Americanos.

~~Scott~~ - Which weekend in June is better? The first or last? *from*

First Quarter 1992 Ratings: (These are based on drawing power, push, work rate, etc., combined; it is not a reflection of the "best" wrestlers or "best" workers around).

Heavier Weights (Heavyweight, Light Heavyweight, Junior Heavyweight, Junior Light Heavyweight)

1) Canek; 2) The Pegasus Kid; 3) Pierroth junior; 4) el Signo; 5) Mil Mascaras; 6) Dos Caras; 7) Cien Caras; 8) el Satanico; 9) Konnan el Barbaro; 10) Pedro "el Perro" Aguayo; 11) Silver King; 12) Jerry Estrada; 13) el Rayo de Jalisco junior; 14) el Brazo de Plata; 15) Lizmark; 16) el Brazo de Oro; 17) el Villano III; 18) The Killer; 19) Apolo Dantes; 20) Enrique Vera.

Lighter Weights (Middleweight, Welterweight, Lightweight, Featherweight):

1) Jose "el Negro" Casas; 2) Fuerza Guerrera; 3) la Bestia Salvaje; 4) Octagon; 5) Saigon Dragon, el Ultimo Dragon; 6) Lasser; 7) The Blue Panther; 8) Atlantis; 9) Emilio Charles junior; 10) el Misterioso; 11) Oro; 12) el Volador; 13) Pimpinela Escarlata; 14) el Hijo del Santo; 15) el Angel Azteca; 16) Ciclón Ramirez; 17) Black Terry; 18) Tony Arce; 18) Super Astro; 19) Erick "el Canelo" Casas; 20) America. (Sorry, Huracan Sevilla; one nice feud, though...)

Ladies Top Five: 1) Lady Apache; 2) Martha "la Aplandora" Villalobos; 3) Cynthia Moreno; 4) Lola "Dinamita" Gonzales; 5) Zuleyma.

Midgets Top Five: 1) la Mascarita Sagrada; 2) Octagoncito; 3) la Aguilita Solitaria; 4) Jerrito Estrada; 5) Espectrito.

Parejas Top Five: 1) Silver King and el Texano; 2) Oro and Plata; 3) Tony Arce and el Vulcano; 4) Jose "el Negro" Casas and el Espanto junior; 5) el Misterioso and el Volador.

Trios Top Five: 1) Los Intocables del Ring; 2) Los Brazos; 3) Los Nuevos Infeinales; 4) La Ola Lila; 5) Los Nuevos Misioneros de la Muerte.

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